



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SEATTLE CITY LIGHT**

Application Number: 3004620

Applicant Name: Amanda Nations for Clearwire

Address of Proposal: 7701 13th Av. S.W.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a minor communication utility consisting of three panel antennas and two microwave dishes (Clearwire). Project includes one new equipment cabinet to be located at grade.

The following approvals are required:

- **Administrative Conditional Use** – Chapter 23.57.10-C2
- **SEPA - Environmental Determination** – Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☐ Exempt ☒ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS
 ☐ DNS with conditions
 ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving
 another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site and Vicinity Description

The subject site is located on the corner of 13th Avenue S.W. and S.W. Holden St. in the West Seattle area. The site is developed with Holden Terrace Apartment Building which occupies approximately 8,400 square feet of lot area. The four-story, Holden Terrace Apartment Building was built in 1978 and has ten residential units. On-site surface parking is located on the west side of the apartment building and is accessed by the 16-foot alley.

The subject site is near the Highland Park neighborhood and is zoned Lowrise Two/Residential Commercial (L-2/RC). Zoning in the area is predominately single-family which surrounds the Lowrise-Two (L-2) and the Lowrise-Two/ Residential Commercial (L-2/RC) zones.

Development in the vicinity consists primarily of single family residences. There is a mixture of single-family and multi-family development along S.W. Holden St.

Additional Information

There is an existing Minor Communication Utility on the roof of the building. DPD issued the Permit No. 2201913 for the existing MCU on November 7, 2002 for AT& T Wireless, however, at the time of this decision, the current operating owner of the existing minor communication utility is Cingular Wireless. The existing utility is a four panel one sector antenna and is mounted near the center of the flat rooftop of the apartment building. The associated electrical and mechanical equipment are housed in a storage room in the first floor basement of the apartment building.

Proposal Description

The applicant proposes a new Minor Communications Utility facility consisting of three panel antennas and two microwave dishes (Clearwire). Project includes one new equipment cabinet to be located at grade adjacent to the west wall of the building.

Comments

No written comment letter was received during the public comment period, which ended on August 2nd, 2006.

ANALYSIS AND CRITERIA - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 23.57.011B provides that a minor communication utility, as regulated pursuant to SMC 23.57.002, may be permitted in a Lowrise zone as an administrative conditional use when it meets the development standards of SMC 23.57.011C and the following criteria, as applicable.

- 1. The project shall not be substantially detrimental to the residential character of nearby residentially zoned areas, and the facility and the location proposed shall be the least intrusive facility at the least intrusive location consistent with effectively providing service. In considering detrimental impacts and the degree of intrusiveness, the impacts considered shall include but not be limited to visual, noise, compatibility with uses allowed in the zone, traffic, and the displacement of residential dwelling units.***

According to the plans, the antennas will conform to codified development standards, visual impacts and design standards of SMC 23.57.011 and 23.57.016. The three antennas and the two microwave dishes will be concealed within a shroud assembly on the roof of an existing multi-family residence. The shroud assembly and coax cover will be painted to match the existing antenna shroud and building, and the height of the new shroud will match the height of the existing shroud, thus providing a facility that is the least intrusive design for this residentially zoned neighborhood.

Some views from neighboring residential structures have been altered by the presence of the existing facility. The applicant has provided photographic evidence suggesting that the visual intrusions are minor.

The proposed minor communication utility is not likely to be substantially detrimental to the residential character of the residentially zoned area, and the location of the panel antennas are the least visually intrusive locations consistent with effectively providing service and minimizing impacts to the existing neighborhood. Neighbors and tenants of the host building will not likely know the facility exists, in terms of its land use, once the antennas are replaced, and cell phone coverage in the area will be improved, which will be beneficial to users in the neighborhood.

Traffic will not be affected by the presence of the constructed facility. The antennas will not emit noise, the one site support cabinet will be located at the west wall of the building and will be surrounded by a wood fence that will shield any noise associated with the equipment, and no residential dwelling units would be displaced.

2. The visual impacts that are addressed in Section 23.57.016 shall be mitigated to the greatest extent practicable.

According to the plans submitted, the proposed height of the new antenna assembly shroud will be the same height as the existing antenna shroud which has proved to be as inconspicuous as possible and within the parameters of the SMC, while remaining functionally effective. Therefore, the proposal complies with this criterion.

- 3. Within a Major Institution Overlay District, a Major Institution may locate a minor communication utility or an accessory communication device, either of which may be larger than permitted by the underlying zone, when:***
- a. The antenna is at least one hundred feet (100') from a MIO boundary, and***
 - b. The antenna is substantially screened from the surrounding neighborhood's view.***

The proposed site is not located within a Major Institution Overlay District. Therefore, this criterion does not apply to the subject proposal.

4. If the minor communication utility is proposed to exceed the zone height limit, the applicant shall demonstrate that the requested height is the minimum necessary for the effective functioning of the minor communication utility.

The proposed height of the minor communication utility is eleven feet four inches (11'4") above the rooftop, with a total height of forty-six feet eight inches (46'8") above existing grade. Documentation within the Master Use Permit file, provided by the applicant, demonstrates the requested height is the minimum necessary for the effective functioning of the minor communication utility; therefore, the proposal complies with this criterion.

- 5. If the proposed minor communication utility is proposed to be a new freestanding transmission tower, the applicant shall demonstrate that it is not technically feasible for the proposed facility to be on another existing transmission tower or on an existing building in a manner that meets the applicable development standards. The location of a facility on a building on an alternative site or sites, including construction of a network that consists of a greater number of smaller less obtrusive utilities, shall be considered.***

The proposed minor communication utility will not be a new freestanding transmission tower. Therefore, this criterion does not apply to the subject proposal.

Summary

The proposed project is consistent with the administrative conditional use criteria of the City of Seattle Municipal code as it applies to wireless communication utilities. The facility is minor in nature and will not be detrimental to the surrounding area while providing needed and beneficial wireless communications service to the area.

The proposed project will not require the expansion of public facilities and services for its construction, operation and maintenance. Once installation of the facility has been completed, approximately one visit per month would occur for routine maintenance. No other traffic would be associated with the project.

DECISION - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

The application for an administrative conditional use is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED.**

ANALYSIS – SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated April 6th, 2006. The information in the checklist and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.554D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states, in part: “Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation,” subject to some limitations. Under such limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D1-7) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

Short-term Impacts

The following temporary construction-related impacts are expected: 1) decreased air quality due to the increase dust and other suspended particulates from building activities; 2) increased noise and vibration from construction operations and equipment; 3) increased traffic and parking demand from construction personnel; 4) blockage of streets by construction vehicles/activities; 5) conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site; and 6) consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Although not significant, the impacts are adverse and certain mitigation measures are appropriate as specified below.

City codes and/or ordinances apply to the proposal and will provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically, these are: 1) Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way during construction, construction along the street right-of-way, and sidewalk repair); and 2) Building Code (construction measures in general). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation and further mitigation by imposing specific conditions is not necessary for these impacts. The proposal is located within residential receptors that would be adversely impacted by construction noise. Therefore, additional discussion of noise impacts is warranted.

Construction Noise

The limitations of the Noise Ordinance (construction noise) are considered inadequate to mitigate the potential noise impacts associated with construction activities. The SEPA Policies at SMC 25.05.675B allow the Director to limit the hours of construction to mitigate adverse noise impacts. Pursuant to this policy and because of the proximity of neighboring residential uses, the applicant will be required to limit excavation, foundation, and external construction work for this project to non-holiday weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. It is also recognized that there are quiet non-construction activities that can be done at any time such as, but not limited to, site security, surveillance, monitoring for weather protection, checking tarps, surveying, and walking on and around the site and structure. These types of activities are not considered construction and will not be limited by the conditions imposed on this Master Use Permit.

The other short-term impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes, ordinances or conditions (e.g., increased traffic during construction, additional parking demand generated by construction personnel and equipment, increased use of energy and natural resources) are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation or discussion.

Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated, as a result of approval of this proposal including: increased traffic in the area and increased demand for parking due to maintenance of the facility; and increased demand for public services and utilities. These impacts are minor in scope and do not warrant additional conditioning pursuant to SEPA policies.

Environmental Health

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has pre-empted state and local governments from regulating personal wireless service facilities on the basis of environmental effects of radio frequency emissions. As such, no mitigation measures are warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

The applicant has submitted a "Statement of Federal Communication Commission Compliance for Personal Wireless Service Facility" and an accompanying "Affidavit of Qualification and Certification" for this proposed facility giving the calculations of radiofrequency power density at roof and ground levels expected from this proposal and attesting to the qualifications of the Professional Engineer who made this assessment. This complies with the Seattle Municipal code Section 25.10.300 that contains Electromagnetic Radiation standards with which the proposal

must conform. The City of Seattle, in conjunction with Seattle King County Department of Public Health, has determined that Personal Communication Systems (PCS) operate at frequencies far below the Maximum Permissible Exposure standards established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and therefore, does not warrant any conditioning to mitigate for adverse impacts.

Summary

In conclusion, several effects on the environment would result from the proposed development. The conditions imposed at the end of this report are intended to mitigate specific impacts identified in the foregoing analysis, to control impacts not adequately regulated by codes or ordinances, per adopted City policies.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).
- [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE AND SEPA CONDITIONS

During Construction

The following condition to be enforced during construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abut the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other waterproofing material and shall remain posted on-site for the duration of the construction.

1. In order to further mitigate the noise impacts during construction, the hours of construction activity shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. This condition may be modified by DPD to allow work of an emergency nature or allow low noise interior work. This condition may also be modified to permit low noise exterior work after approval from the Land Use Planner.

2. Screening shall be integrated with the architectural design, materials, shapes and colors that are consistent with the current exterior of the building. The screens shall be designed to mimic the look of brick chimneys.

Signature: (signature on file)
Joan Carson, Land Use Planner II
Department of Planning and Development

Date: August 24, 2006

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